Detailed Project Report for the 1525 MW Sankosh Multipurpose Project and also agreed to start work shortly on the Kurichu Hydel Project in Eastern Bhutan.

Failure of India's Lobbying firm in USA

4643. SHRI G. Y. KRISHNAN : Will the Ministry of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether India's lobbying firm has failed to stop the Council of Khalistan from making another group of legislators write to U.S. President Bill Clinton on continuing" human rights abuses in Punjab ; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Indian Embassy in Washington to put across the dimensions of the Punjab problem in its proper perspective and counter the vicious propaganda being launched by some India-baiter Congressmen ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) : (a) Government are aware that several US Congressmen have written, individually or in groups, to President Clinton expressing concern about the situation in Punjab and alleging human rights violations by Indian security forces.

(b) Government have, through its Embassy in the US, and other channels, endeavoured to correct misperceptions on the issue highlighting that the situation in the Punjab today is peaceful and that there is today a democratically elected government in Punjab, where the rights of all Indians including Sikhs are protected under the law, regardless of their religion. This has been done by means of meetings, letters, speeches to members of the US Congress, officials of the US Administration, influential opinion-makers and representatives of the US media.

Production of Mineral Water in the country

4644. DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR : Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) what is the total production of mineral water in the country during the last three years ;

(b) what is the number of units engaged in the production of mineral water in the private and public sectors in the country ; and

(c) what is the mechanism of quality control in this areas ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI TARUN GOGOI) : (a) to (c) At present there are no specifications laid down for mineral water under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954. Hence the number of units engaged in the production of mineral water cannot be given.

Licence for Distilleries

4645. SHRI G. Y. KRISHNAN : Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that several lakhs of tonnes of grains such as Wheat, Barley, Maize, Rice etc. are damaged and destroyed every year due to poor and defective storage, and Vanaspati and fruit crops, like potato, Beet roots, Pineapples and other fruit crops are also damaged due to untimely and inadequate transport/transit facilities during peak seasons with the result that these products become unhygenic and unfit for human consumption and thus the real sufferers are the poor farmers and landless labourers ;

(b) if the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative whether Government will relax rules for issuing of New Letters of Intent and Industrial licences for distilleries and Breweries to produce potable Alcohol based on the products referred in part (a) above for relief of poor farmers and landless labourers to save their soul, if so, what are the details thereof ; and

(c) what are the names and details of authorities to be approached for grant of such licences ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI TARUN GOGOI) :

(a) During storage, various kinds of pests, including fungi, bacteria, insects and rodents can cause considerable damage if storage, transport and transit facilities are not good enough.